

Inspection of a good school: The Hathershaw College

Bellfield Avenue, Hathershaw, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL8 3EP

Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2021

Outcome

The Hathershaw College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Hathershaw College. They said that the school is a happy place to learn, where everybody 'gets on well together'. Pupils described the firm friendships that exist within the school community.

Pupils feel safe. They are very appreciative of the care and support that they receive from all adults at the school. They are confident that there is always somebody to talk to should they have any concerns.

Pupils behave sensibly around the school and in lessons. They are respectful to other pupils, staff, and visitors. Pupils spoke with real enthusiasm about the school's system for rewarding how well they behave, for example being kind or polite. They said that this system is used regularly and consistently by all their teachers.

Pupils described the effective systems in place for them to report any rare incidents of bullying. They are confident that staff would deal with any incidents of bullying quickly.

Pupils appreciate the 'Hathershaw Extras', which consist of a range of planned extra-curricular activities, including sports and arts clubs. In addition, pupils benefit from whole-school leadership opportunities. They make very positive contributions to their school and local communities, such as participating in charitable work.

Teachers are determined that all pupils will succeed. They are fully committed to ensuring that pupils become knowledgeable, confident, resilient and successful young adults. Most pupils achieve well.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including trustees and governors, are highly ambitious for pupils. They are determined that Hathershaw College will provide pupils with life-changing opportunities. To this end, they seek out any available opportunity to improve pupils' experiences at the

school. They have created an atmosphere where teachers and pupils want to learn. Pupils behave well. They are courteous and treat each other with consideration.

Leaders have developed a broad and rich curriculum for all pupils. Consequently, a considerable proportion of pupils, including those pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), now study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. This is because leaders have raised the profile and importance of making appropriate subject choices. They have helped pupils to see the link between different subjects and future career pathways.

Leaders have thought deeply about how to build up pupils' subject knowledge. As a result, subject plans are ambitious and ordered in a logical manner. The plans provide a clear outline of what pupils are expected to know and remember as they move through the curriculum. Leaders provide teachers with focused training and collaborative planning time. This helps them choose the most appropriate activities to deliver new subject content to great effect.

Assessment strategies are carefully matched to the knowledge that is prescribed in the curriculum. This means that teachers are aware of exactly how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Teachers use this information to address misconceptions and to make appropriate adaptations to how they deliver subject plans. Pupils said that they value the feedback and support that they receive from their teachers.

Staff are determined to develop pupils' every day and subject-specific vocabulary and their spoken language skills. They are supporting pupils to read more proficiently and more often. As such, they have recently introduced a raft of new strategies to improve pupils' literacy skills and to promote reading across the school. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to some pupils regressing in their reading and communication skills. While leaders have intensified their efforts to provide additional support to those pupils who have fallen behind, there remain deficits in their reading knowledge and use of spoken language. This hinders how well these pupils progress through the curriculum.

Leaders have clear systems in place to identify those pupils who have SEND. They work closely with a range of external partners to ensure that the needs of these pupils are well met. Teaching assistants work successfully with teachers to support pupils with SEND. They equally support those pupils who speak English as an additional language so that they learn the curriculum well.

Leaders have designed an effective personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum. They ensure that it provides pupils with the knowledge that they need for their everyday lives. Pupils enjoy this aspect of their learning. They are appreciative of the guidance that they have received around careers.

Trustees and governors provide a supportive but robust level of challenge to leaders. Staff value the steps that leaders have taken to ease their workload and support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are knowledgeable about the risks that pupils face outside of school, including those linked to online safety. Leaders have provided pupils with a number of helpful ways to share any safeguarding related worries or concerns that they may have.

Staff training is regular and comprehensive. Staff are vigilant to any signs of harm among pupils. Staff know how to report any concerns that they may have. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding secure timely and effective support for pupils and their families from external agencies, as required. The PSHE curriculum is planned so that pupils know how to keep themselves safe now and when they leave school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some pupils who find reading difficult. Some other pupils do not read as often as they should. In addition, some pupils do not have a sufficiently strong knowledge of generic and subject-specific language. This situation has been exacerbated because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These issues hamper pupils progress through the curriculum. Leaders should review the effectiveness of the strategies that they use to support pupils with their reading and language development and amend their plans accordingly. This is so that pupils who are behind with their reading, communication, and vocabulary development catch up quickly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137039
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10199709
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1070
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Ateeque Ur-Rehman
Principal	Mark Giles
Website	www.hathershaw.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hathershaw College is part of The Pinnacle Learning Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, a new principal has been appointed.
- The school makes use of a small number of registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the principal, other senior leaders, the acting special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also spoke with the school improvement partner.

- The lead inspector met with representatives from the board of trustees of The Pinnacle Learning Trust. They also met with representatives of the local governing body (LGB), including the chair of the LGB. Inspectors also scrutinised the minutes of LGB meetings.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, design and technology, geography, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also met with the subject leaders of expressive arts and mathematics to discuss wider aspects of the curriculum.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to consider the culture of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, including leaders' pre-employment checks on staff. Inspectors spoke to trustees, governors, staff and pupils about wider aspects of safeguarding. They also considered survey responses from staff, parents and carers, and pupils around safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to the curriculum, pupil behaviour, monitoring information, improvement plans and the self-evaluation summary.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including at breaktimes, in corridors, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their programme of wider personal development, including the PSHE programme.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alyson Middlemass, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Phil Lloyd

Ofsted Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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